

Woodbury CleanWater

A special edition about water in Woodbury

November/December 2018

Pond maintenance improves quality of lakes and wetlands

Did you know there are more than 500 stormwater ponds in Woodbury that the city is responsible for inspecting and maintaining?

These ponds provide flood control and help prevent soils, debris and nutrients from reaching our natural lakes and wetlands. City staff evaluates stormwater ponds annually to identify which ones need cleaning to allow for effective water quality treatment and storage.

Pond maintenance is done mostly in the winter, making the work more efficient and less expensive. Pond maintenance activities typically take place in the same neighborhoods as the following summer's road rehabilitation project, allowing the heavy equipment needed for maintenance to travel on roads and trails that are scheduled to be replaced. Road rehabilitation also creates an opportunity to identify areas for additional water treatment and storage, like the boulevard rain gardens installed along Interlachen Parkway in 2016. For example, the boulevard rain gardens installed along Interlachen Parkway in 2016. These features are possible with the support of Woodbury's three watershed districts, which assist in design, installation and maintenance of these important infrastructure improvements.

This year's pond maintenance project will include the Marsh Creek area, Ojibway Park and a few



ponds near Upper Afton Road. Pond maintenance projects are paid for through the \$18.75 stormwater utility fee collected through quarterly utility bills, along with assistance from the watershed districts.

Watch for thin ice on Battle Creek and Colby Lakes

Thin ice and areas of open water may be found all winter on Battle Creek and Colby Lakes in Woodbury due to aeration systems operated by the city. The aeration systems circulate the water in the lakes to oxygenate them, keeping the fish alive through the winter.

The lakes were selected for aeration because their shallow depth results in low oxygen levels. All neighboring residents and recreational users of Battle Creek and Colby Lakes should note the location of the aeration systems and stay clear of the area posted for thin ice.

The aeration system in Colby Lake will be located in the southeast part of the lake near Edgewater Park. The aeration system in Battle Creek Lake will be operated adjacent to the fishing pier, north of the public access area in Shawnee Park. The perimeter of each aeration system will be posted with orange and white reflective signs that warn: "Danger - Thin Ice."



The aeration systems will be turned on in December, weather permitting, and remain in operation until the ice is out. For more information, call the Parks Division at (651) 714-3720.

City and developments use rain water for irrigation

You may know that the two golf courses in Woodbury both reuse rainwater collected in ponds to irrigate the greens and fairways. But did you know that three city-owned parks, including the HealthEast Sports Center, also reuse rainwater for irrigation? These systems function like an oversized rain barrel to keep fields green and healthy,



without depending solely on the groundwater resource needed for drinking water. Combined, these five city systems reuse more than 60 million gallons of rainwater each year.

Five recent developments followed in the city's footsteps and were designed with irrigation reuse systems: St. Therese Senior Living, Harvest Commons, Bielenberg Gardens, City Place and Ascend at Woodbury. In 2019, we expect to see five additional reuse systems installed on private senior living, townhome and commercial sites.

Smart irrigation is improving water efficiency in Woodbury

The City of Woodbury is working alongside homeowners, commercial properties and homeowner associations to advance technology on irrigation systems and improve water efficiency.

In 2018, 1,000 homes participated in the Smart Irrigation Controller Program offered by the city. Research completed by the University of Minnesota, in partnership with Woodbury, estimates that the average water savings per household for irrigation systems with improved water efficiency technology is 30,000 gallons each year. If you add the savings this year to the homes that have previously participated in the program, the program is reducing water use by 45 million gallons of water each year.

“Participating in the program and installing a smart controller results in a return on investment within one year,” explained Kristin Seaman, environmental resources specialist who manages the program for the city. “In addition, 95 percent of participants report being satisfied or very satisfied with their new controller.”

In addition, 23 homeowner associations and commercial properties participated in the Irrigation Efficiency Cost Share program this year, reducing annual water use by 10 million gallons of water annually. Adding these groups to the 24 associations and commercial properties that participated in 2017 and the properties in the previous two-year pilot, the community has reduced irrigation water use at commercial and homeowner association properties by an estimated 24.3 million gallons each year.

Want to save water and money?

Homeowners with irrigation systems can sign up for the 2019 residential controller program



by visiting woodburymn.gov/smartirrigation and selecting “Sign up for the 2019 waiting list.” Through this program, the city purchases smart controllers in bulk and sells them to residents at a discounted rate. Participants must have an irrigation system that was installed prior to 2018. Those signed up will be contacted in February regarding next steps.

Homeowner associations and commercial properties with irrigation systems can work with their irrigation company to submit a proposal for the 2019 cost share program (50 percent funding up to \$8,000). The application period is Feb. 1, 2019, through April 30, 2019. Application information is available at woodburymn.gov/commercialirrigation.

Questions about the water efficiency programs should be directed to Seaman at (651) 714-3593 or kristin.seaman@woodburymn.gov.

Thank you to the following Woodbury associations and properties that committed to water efficiency by participating in the irrigation efficiency cost share program in 2018:

- ABright Keys of Spring Hill
- Cardinal Way
- City Centre Medical Building
- Conifer Point Townhomes
- Copper Oaks Clubhomes Association
- Courtyard at Landsway Dancing Waters
- Crestview at Woodbury
- Crossroads Commerce Center
- Delta Sundown Village
- Fairway Meadows Patio Home Association
- Heritage Park Townhomes Association
- Lakepoint Carriage Homes Association
- Pendryn Villas HOA
- Pinecrest Villas at Woodbury
- Powers Lake Townhomes
- Preserve Twinhome Association
- Seasons Plaza Medical Building
- Spinnaker Cove Courthomes I Association
- Steepleview Place Homeowner Association
- The North Shore at Powers Lake
- Wedgewood Association
- Westview Estates
- Windom Ponds Townhomes

Pollinator habitat blooming in new Woodbury locations

Significant improvements to Woodbury’s pollinator habitat were made this year through a program that converted turf areas to native prairies.

The South Washington Watershed District partnered with School District 833 and the City of Woodbury on the Campus Greening Project at Lake Middle and Middleton Elementary Schools. The project resulted in the creation of 15 acres of prairie, more than 200 trees planted and the installation of an outdoor classroom at each school.

The city and watershed district also have converted a trail corridor from mowed turf grass to

11 acres of prairie between Ojibway Park and Bailey Road. The city also is making vegetation improvements around 17 stormwater ponds and a wetland complex south of the HealthEast Sports Center.

Native plants, trees and prairies create beneficial habitat for pollinators, birds and other wildlife. The areas also provide surface water and air quality benefits. They also require less long-term maintenance, which results in reduced costs for the city.

To learn more about new projects and how you can contribute, visit woodburymn.gov/native-plants.

